

Warrior Resilience & Thriving (WRT) History, Application and Insights 2005-2009



Thriving Through, Not Only Surviving Your Combat Deployment to Return with Honor

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WRT Program Description

Warrior Resilience & Thriving (WRT) was developed and refined in Operation Iraqi Freedom 2005-2006; 2008-2009, as a standardized 90-minute, combat and operational stressinoculation, resiliency, thriving and Posttraumatic growth (PTG) class. WRT is firmly grounded in Army Leadership and Warrior Ethos principles (FM 6-22), Cognitive and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) self-counseling, Posttraumatic Growth and Positive Psychology's focus on character strengths and virtue WRT was implemented with over 12,500 Warriors and Commands in OIF from July 2008 to March 2009 and selected as an MNC-I Suicide Reduction Resiliency initiative used to train 325 WRT Instructor Trainers in the OIF theater, based on consistently positive unit feedback derived from over 3,550 Feedback forms

WRT Color Coded Slides

- As you master the WRT material, note the color coded terms.
 They will assist you to master WRT more quickly, and serve as a quick review when necessary.
- <u>Remaining</u> Rational and Resilient requires practice and application <u>daily!</u>
- WRT, Resiliency, Virtue and Character Strengths and Rationality are in blue signifying calm and self-control
- Warrior Ethos, Thriving and Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) are in Army green, signifying growth
- Irrational beliefs and PTSD or Combat Operational Stress Reactions (COS-R) and other risk factors are in red, signaling "at risk" or caution!

WRT Variants & Applications



90- Minute mobile training Classes

- Warrior Resilience Training (2005-2006)
- Warrior Family Resilience & Thriving (2007-present)
- Warrior Family Resilience & Thriving (WFRT) 2007-present;
- Elite Warrior Resilience & Thriving (2007);
- Warrior Resilience & Thriving-Provider (WRT-P) 2005-present
- Warrior Resilience & Thriving Instructor Trainer (WRT-IT)
 Course (2009-presented

WRT Groups

- WRT Medic Cross-Training, 8 Session course (OIF) 2005-2006
- WRT counseling group, 4-6 sessions, 2005-present
- Warrior Family Resilience & Thriving (WFRT) counseling group (2007-present)

WRT Sample Soldier Comments



- "Great presentation, the best I have ever seen." –PV2
- "This was by far one of the most useful classes I have ever been a part of. Thank you."-SPC
- "This brief has opened up many possibilities for me to be a better leader."-SGT
- "I received this training in 2006, since then the course has grown and improved. Keep up the good work!" –SSG
- "Every unit should receive this training before deployment, best tool received in 16 years to deal with deployment issues."-SFC
- "Great training, probably the best military training I have received by any Army Training. Please continue to use this type of training."-MSG
- "All soldiers should go to this training. Very, very helpful." -1SG
- "The best and most comprehensive briefing I've received on the subject over the past 25 years."
 -SGM
- "Excellent class. Much needed information. Very powerful and I really needed to hear this." CPT
- "Best class I have had on the mental stability of troops. I am glad we are getting away from being so focused on PTSD"- CPT
- "Very insightful. Should be very effective and make a difference in peoples' lives."-MAJ
- "Phenomenal professionals that embrace what they teach. Reaffirming what I have lived as a soldier and leader!" - COL

One Unit's Comments

(EOD Camp Liberty, Iraq/ n.= 32)

*all comments included

- "One of the Best Combat Stress Courses I have ever seen, this course should be at the top of the list of deploying units" -SSG
- "The single most beneficial mental health training I have received in 15 years in the Army. This Training needs to be doctrine. Place in DVD with Links to Web and push out to DOD" -CPT/CDR
- "Extremely Applicable Topics" –E5
- "Great Presentation, the best I have ever seen" –E2
- "Some of the best and newest version of training I have ever seen" -2LT "Loved the theories, very close to my own beliefs" -SPC
- "A class for spouses would be great-SPC" "I received this training in 2006, since then the course has grown and improved. Keep up the good work!" –SSG
- "I really appreciate that the instructors did not insult my intelligence or the intelligence of our unit" -SGT
- "This was honestly the best training I could receive on the subject. The only part which could have been better was the beginning"—SSG
- "Excellent, relevant training. Well- Suited presentation pertaining to today's soldiers excellent use of history and lore to make points and keep interest" -SPC
- "Outstanding class, I wish I had this training three deployments ago" –SSGT





Expect and Prepare for Adversity and Hardship Before They Arrive as Well as the Growth That Usually Follows!

Key Personal Attributes <u>Sustaining</u> Resiliency and Thriving

Resilient Character Components

- Endurance: The ability or strength to continue or last <u>despite</u> <u>fatigue</u>, <u>stress</u> or <u>adversity</u> and multiple deployments: Fortitude, grit, guts, intestinal fortitude, staying power
- Resiliency: The ability to <u>recover quickly</u> from illness, change, or misfortune. Bounding back and driving on <u>despite</u> external stress: Spiritual strength, vigor, durability, "grace under pressure"
- Character: Moral excellence, ethical standards and principles in action. Includes Virtues and Character Strengths like Wisdom, Courage, Justice, Temperance Humanity and Transcendence (Spirituality) and the 7 Army Values
- Thriving & Post Traumatic Growth (PTG): Enhanced functioning and positive change after enduring a trauma or adversity including relating to others, new possibilities (and choices), personal strength, spiritual strength, and appreciation of life *

^{*} See Calhoun & Tedeschi: Handbook of Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) and the PTG Inventory

Cross-cultural Virtues and Character Strengths

Samurai & Bushido
Nine virtues

Honor

Loyalty

Courage

Respect

Honesty

Wisdom

Filial piety

Rectitude

Benevolence

U.S. Army
Seven Values

Honor

Loyalty

Personal Courage

Respect

Duty

Selfless Service

Integrity

Positive Psychology's

Six Universal

Virtues

*The Four

Virtues"

Ancient "Cardinal

*Wisdom

*Justice

*Courage

*Temperance

(Prudence)

Humanity

Transcendence

(Spirituality)

*Please take the Values in Action Survey, and other WRT 2 useful measures at: http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/

WRT 2008 Unclassified Informational

Purposes Only





Combat Operational Stress (COS) and COS Reactions(COS-R) are more common than PTSD, though they share Some Key Features

Reviewing <u>Select</u> Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT) Findings



Marine by Tom Lea, a writer and artist for Life magazine, who landed with Marines on Peleliu in Sentember 1944.

COSR & PTSD in the Media: We are not <u>all traumatized</u>, Around 70% will experience some Combat Operational Stress (COS)





Combat and Operational Stress Reaction (COS-R): Physical, mental, and emotional symptoms that <u>may</u> result from Combat and Deployment including <u>Potentially</u> <u>Traumatic Events</u> (PTE)

Resilient Role Model GEN CARTER HAM

- In 2004, GEN Ham was the commander of Multi-National Brigade-North (MNB-N) in Iraq. He survived IED strikes and other attacks. On Dec 21, 2004 14 US troops under his command were killed in a brazen suicide bombing in a DFAC in Mosul
- GEN Ham returned from the war and recognized that things were different. He sought help from a Chaplain and then went public to encourage other Warriors to get help – a sign of strength, not weakness

"Something was <u>different</u>... The dog comes bounding out of the house and leaps up on me and I start bawling like a baby... I needed a little help and I got a little help."

 Not <u>PTSD</u> but Post Combat Stress Disorder, which includes sleeping difficulties, anxiety, irritability and feeling out of place, affecting up to 20 % of returning combat veterans





Resiliency Insight #3

Combat, Adversity and Hardship
Can Strengthen our Characters and
Build Resiliency When We Adopt and
Maintain a Warrior Philosophy

Being a Warrior is Mostly a State of Mind

Converting Misfortune into Growth (PTG): Remembering Dr. Al Siebert

"Learning lessons in the school of life is the antidote to feeling victimized. They can convert a situation that is emotionally toxic for others into something emotionally nutritious for them. They thrive in situations distressing to others because they learn good lessons from bad experiences. They convert misfortune into good luck and gain strength from adversity"

^{*}Adapted from Dr. Al Siebert: The Survivor Personality & Resiliency Advantage

Five Responses to Coping with Crisis

O'Leary & Ickovicks-modified



New York 9-11

Traditional Therapy Focus

- 1. Kindling (Worsening): Overreacting that worsens the problem and causes us to succumb to adversity
- Suffering (Victimized): Feeling persecuted or victimized by our circumstances
- **3. Surviving** (Existing): Returning to a subnormal level of daily existence. "Making it" but <u>not</u> growing

Warrior Domain

- **4. Resilience** (Recovering): Bounding back to our pre-trauma state. Rolling with life's misfortunes
- 5. Thriving (Flourishing): Bouncing back, <u>up and beyond</u>. Transcending our previous level of living

^{*}As found in Dr. Pearsall's The Beethoven Factor

Resilient Role Model:

Dr. Vicktor Frankl & Logotherapy



- Dr. Victor Frankl, author of <u>Man's Search For Meaning</u> was a psychiatrist who survived the <u>Holocaust</u> in World War II
- He noted that prisoners who could apply an adaptive or significant meaning to their pain and suffering survived longer with more dignity than those who decided their suffering was meaningless and became helpless, hopeless and apathetic

"It did not really matter what <u>we</u> expected from life, but rather what <u>life</u> expected from us. We needed to stop asking about the meaning of life, and instead to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life - daily and hourly

 As a POW, or in any traumatic situation we must <u>always</u> "manage the meaning" and answer life's hard questions





Character, Virtue and Personal Discipline: Western Warrior Ethos & Modern Army Leadership

Real Foundations for Personal and Team Resiliency and Combat Stress Control



Republics, Reason and Virtue From Ancient Greece to the U.S.A



- Character, rationality, self-discipline and citizenship were character strengths promoted in Ancient Greece, the Roman and British Empires and early United States
- Though all empires have faults and eventually fail, they all flourished through the strength of character of their citizens
- Character Strengths and Virtues are <u>still</u> found today in the 7 Army Values, Warrior Ethos, Code of Conduct, Ranger, NCO Creed and other Army codes and creeds. Character Counts!
- Each Soldier is responsible for his or her own character, ethical and behavioral choices. No excuses!
- The United States of America, as a world leader, is firmly committed to <u>only</u> "Winning with Honor"

Classic Warrior Coping Beliefs Throughout History



- Character can be enhanced throughout our lifetimes
- Hardship and misfortune are tools to strengthen Warriors just as metal is forged, not always a "trauma"
- Every day is an Olympic game or Gladiatorial contest in which we are tested. "Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional!"
- Death, injury and loss are occupational hazards that Warriors seek to avoid yet must accept acknowledge in the "Profession of Arms." Warrior Families must also accept these risks
- The Honor and the reputation of the Family, Team, Unit or Nation must be maintained through Right Action
- In Combat, the Mission and Team often take priority over personal issues, sometimes even Family issues temporarily

Resiliency Insight #5



Marcus Aurelius
The Stoic Emperor

"It is not the event itself, but the view we take of it which disturbs us"

-Epictetus, Former Slave and Stoic Philosopher

Managing Combat Operational Stress By
Managing Our Perceptions



Leaders cannot be at the mercy of emotion. It is critical for leaders to remain calm under pressure and expend energy on things they can positively influence and not worry about things they cannot affect

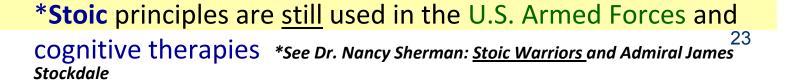
FM 6-22 Army Leadership

Stoic "Warriors": 300 B.C.— Present Ancient Resilient Philosophy



Stoics believed that humans can only <u>fully</u> control or choose their paths, thoughts, feelings and actions. <u>All</u> external things are only within our influence. Stoics therefore focused on their:

- **1. Will and Moral Purpose:** Spiritual paths, life philosophies, moral excellence, Character Strengths and Virtues
- **2. Rationality:** Rational beliefs, values and appraisals. Stoics rigorously managed their perceptions and evaluations
- 3. Adaptive Emotions: Eliminating rage, panic, depression and excessive guilt and generating moderate emotions like grief, sorrow, remorse, joy, tranquility and confidence
- 4. Right Actions: Goal-oriented and responsive, not self-destructive, reactive or dangerous. Developing the "habit of virtue"





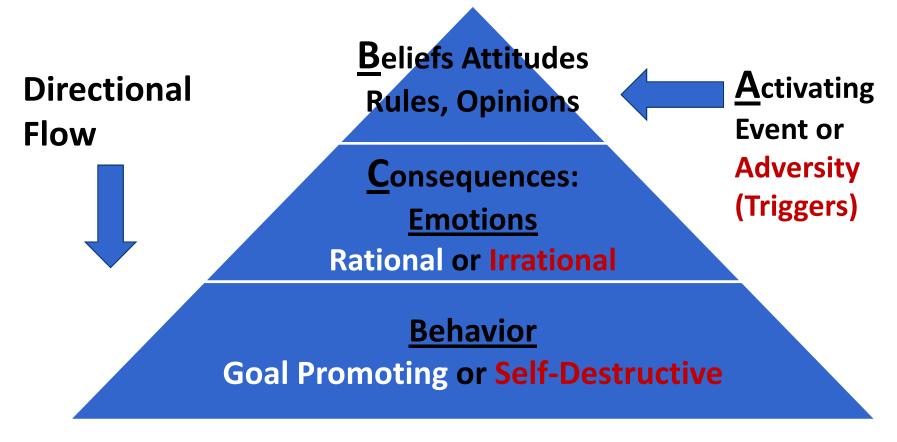
Rational Emotive Behavior Self-Coaching

(REBT & Dr. Albert Ellis)

Responding vs. Reacting
Stoic Principles and Modern Rational
Counseling for Warrior Self-coaching

REBT "A-B-C" Cycle of Emotions

Our evaluations and appraisals generate our emotions and behavior. Select a rational perspective or suffer the emotional and behavioral consequences!





Resiliency Insight #6

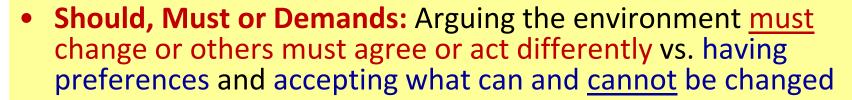
The enemies of reason are Irrational Beliefs: Like "internal insurgents" Warriors must identify, neutralize and replace them!

Identifying and Disputing Irrational Beliefs and Cognitive Distortions

"Internal Insurgents"

A Recipe for Suffering

Dr. Albert Ellis & Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)



- Low Frustration Tolerance: Telling yourself you can't stand or endure something or someone vs. resiliency and tolerance
- Awfulizing/Magnification: Convincing yourself events are the worst thing possible vs. putting them in a rational perspective that you can accept. Not "liking it" or "rose-colored glasses" as much as dealing with events rationally
- Blame, Self-blame or Personalization: Externalizing or blaming others, or taking things personally vs. accepting responsibility



Warrior Self-coaching Example



A = Activating Event: Divorce, separation, UCMJ,

team conflict, etc...(Really any negative event)

B = Beliefs: This is unfair! This must not be! She/he/this is a &%\$#@! This is terrible!! I can't take this! They are making me feel this way! I have to stop this!

C = Consequences (Emotions and actions <u>we</u> create)

Emotions: Panicked, depressed, rageful, apathetic, resentful

Actions: Fighting (in person or long-distance), threats, low performance, reduced mission capability

*Suicidal or Homicidal thoughts and behaviors. <u>Get help immediately!</u> (Chain of Command, E.R. CSC, Behavioral Health, Chaplain, Onesource)

D = Disputation Challenging Irrational Beliefs



- Why <u>must</u> he/she/they/life be <u>perfectly</u> fair?
- Marriage vows/codes/rules are <u>not</u> guarantees of perfect behavior, but agreements and covenants!
- Just because I maintain my values, does not mean others must as well! How can I influence others to honor the standards they have agreed to or accept they won't?
- Telling myself "this is terrible" is making it worse!
- Why <u>must</u> things be my way?
- Who gave me a "right to be angry," besides me?
- Why can't I stand this? Have I not endured this far?

E = <u>Effective</u> New Beliefs



- This is outside of my control, I can only control myself and influence or lead others!
- This is happening for a reason. I will <u>choose</u> or find a meaning I can live with! Have faith and stay optimistic!
- I can and will handle this. Stay responsive!
- My team, family and country need me to endure, stay strong and complete this mission. It not just about me!
- I will get through this! This is temporary!
- How is this adversity strengthening my character?
- I can and will remain resilient and thrive through this!

Resiliency Insight #7



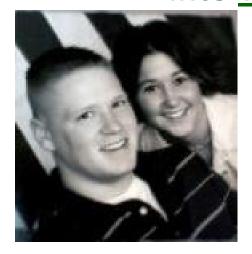
The Correct Degree of Emotions Guide Warriors by:

- Connecting us with others (grief, sorrow, compassion)
- <u>Revealing</u> to us through our <u>reactions</u> and later <u>responses</u> what we consider important and relevant in life
- Inspiring us to great heights (empathy, love, joy, pride)
- Protecting and guiding us, by signaling or detecting danger, often before our rational minds can respond (intuition, flight/fight, "sixth sense." Not irrationality
- Allowing us to have compassion and empathy for our Fellow Warriors, Families and even our enemies, when in captivity. Warriors practice *Emotional Intelligence

^{*}Read Daniel Goleman's **Emotional Intelligence**

Resilient Role Model SGT Ty Ziegel, U.S.M.C.

One Warrior's Philosophy That Turned Loss into Thriving and Post Traumatic Growth



With Fiancée
Before Combat
Casualty

Despite pervasive injuries, including loss of left arm and eye, part of his skull and brain and right fingers, and 80% overall burns, Ty Ziegel's Warrior Ethos continues to inspire others



After **SVBIED** and Rehabilitation at Fort Sam

Adopting a Warrior Philosophy

Victim = Red (Before speaking with Ty) vs.

Warrior = Green (*After inspiration from TY)

Thinking

Worst Thing

That Could

Have Happened

"Right to be Angry"

VS.

It Could Have

Been So Much

Much worse! Actions

Avoiding Rehab Argumentative

VS.

Motivated to

Rehabilitate

More Social

WRT 2008 Unclassified For Informational Purposes Only

Emotions

Rage, Resentment

Depression

VS.

Relief, &

Appreciative

Acceptance

Resiliency Insight # 8 Marry a Warrior and You Join The "Warrior Elite"



- The 7 Army Values may serve as a template and guide to balancing Army and Family Life, when lived and modeled by both Spouses and Soldiers alike
- Army Families are an elite "Warrior culture", which requires great character and commitment. We are not in the Army alone, our family is in with us
- Warriors families that learn together to remain resilient and thrive will have the best hope of "Returning and living with Honor"
- If you are single or in a committed relationship, ask if your future spouse can and will maintain these or similar Character Strengths and Values in the future



Resilient Role Models Admiral James and Sybil Stockdale



Returning with Honor

- Served 8 years the ranking Naval Officer POW in North Vietnam's "Hanoi Hilton"
- Brutally tortured and manipulated by North Vietnamese captors. Incurred PTSD and TBI during captivity
- Fought for and lived the "Code of Conduct" and led fellow Americans through his personal example of virtue and selfdiscipline. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor
- Used Stoicism as a form of resiliency to endure captivity with honor as described in his book <u>Courage Under Fire Testing</u> <u>Epictetus's Doctrines in a Laboratory of Human Behavior</u>
- His spouse Sybil Stockdale maintained fidelity, faith and hope during his ordeal. She is a true Warrior Spouse who received one of the highest U.S. civil awards for service. She and Admiral Stockdale wrote In Love and War

Resiliency Quotes Worldwide

- "As a man thinketh, so is he" Proverbs 23:7
- "The mind is its own place, and in itself, can make heaven of hell and a hell of heaven" John Milton-Author
- "Its not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it"
 Hans Selye- Scientist who coined the term "stress"
- "If we know why (we suffer) we can endure any how"
- "What doesn't break my back makes me stronger"
 Nietzsche- German Philosopher
- "...more than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope..."
 Romans 5:3



WRT Checklist

- 1. Is this event <u>fully</u> within my control or not?
- 2. Am I focusing on what I can control, as the Serenity Prayer suggests, or trying to change my environment?
- 3. Am I maintaining my virtue, reason, purpose and optimism for myself, my team and my family?
- 4. Am I reacting like a victim or responding as a Warrior?
- 5. How will I remain resilient and thrive through this?
- 6. Who should assist me professionally? (CSC, Chaplain, etc..)
- 7. What true harm can come to me as a Warrior if I maintain my virtue, faith, and honor, including even my own death?
- 8. Now that I am back in control, how will I lead my team?



98th CSC Warrior Resilience Training Feedback Form: Rollup, N= 2270 14 July 2008 – 3 November 2008 Camp Liberty, Iraq

MAJ Thomas A. Jarrett, LCSW/DCSW
MND-B/ VBC Prevention OIC
98th Combat Stress Control Det
SSG Michael Venuto, NCOIC
SPC Jon M. Miles, 68X

98th CSC Warrior Resilience Training Feedback Form

| Mean average of 2270 surveys. 2 November 2 | | | <i>2008.</i> | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------|-------|---------------|
| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agre |
| I now understand and can recognize "Post Traumatic Growth" at least as well as I can recognize "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder" (4.13 or 82.5%) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I believe that I can and will be strengthened through my deployment experiences, even if they are negative or painful (4.26 or 85.2%) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Compared to other Army Combat Stress, Suicide Awareness or Resiliency Briefings (Including Battlemind) I have attended, I believe this training will be more useful in managing Deployment, Combat and Real-Life Stressors (4.22 or 84.4%) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The instructor(s) were professional and effective in conveying the training (4.64or 92.7%) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I believe this training will assist me to become more resilient and learn to thrive during this deployment and when I return home (4.18 or 98th CSC WRT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

UCLASSIFIED/FOUO

98th CSC Warrior Resilience & Thriving (WRT) Feedback Form: Rollup, n.= 882 18 December 2008 - 22 January 2009 Camp Liberty, Iraq

MAJ Thomas A. Jarrett, LCSW/DCSW
MND-B/ Victory Prevention OIC
98th Combat Stress Control
SSG Michael Venuto, NCOIC
SPC Jon M. Miles, 68X

98th CSC WRT UCLASSIFIED/OUO

98th CSC Warrior Resilience & Thriving Training Feedback Form

Mean average of 882 surveys as of 22 January 2009

- 1. Strongly Disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- **5. Strongly Agree**
- 1. After WRT, I can now recognize signs of "Post Traumatic Growth" in myself and others as well as I can recognize signs of "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (4.00 or 80.1%)
- 2. Character Strengths and Virtues, as found in the 7 Army Values and promoted in WRT, serve as a foundation of personal and team resiliency and thriving (4.27 or 85.3%)
- 3. Compared to other Army Combat Stress, Suicide Awareness or Resiliency Briefings (Including Battlemind) I have attended, I believe WRT will be very useful in managing Deployment, Combat and Real-Life Stressors (4.29 or 85.8%)
- 4. I understand and can use the REBT "ABC" Model of Emotions and Stoic principles taught in WRT to manage strong, negative emotions and reduce irrational beliefs and manage combat operational stress while deployed (4.04 or 80.7%)
- 5. WRT will assist me to become much more resilient and thrive through my deployment experiences both here and also when I return home with my family (4.07 or 81.5%)

So What?

- WRT is not special, human's ability to endure and prevail is real message
- Resiliency & thriving training are life-courses and applicable to any rank, age or
 MOS when tailored for each audience. Warriors need life's insights today, now...
- Saturate your operational area. Classes are not optional. No one opts out
- Send instructors who see themselves as Warrior Healers, not therapists or Doctors (though they may be). Use posttruamatic growth (Calhoun & Tedesdchi) as inventory for pre-screening potential instructors
- Avoid terms like counseling, group, patient, and other therapeutic terms when teaching resiliency & thriving. Your grandmother got this.
- Always teach with combined enlisted/officer when possible
- Adjust to the units op-tempo. Orbit an area until each and every soldier is trained. Return each 3-6 months
- Leave unit peer counselors who "get" posttraumatic growth. You will have volunteers after every training. Use them!
- Train families to be part of the Warrior Elite as well. Without their support, no one will endure or remain resilient
- Work with Chaplains, they are the original "combat stress control"
- Be humble, you are in the presence of greatness. Warriors are <u>your</u> teachers

On behalf of the Fort Sill Outreach & Prevention Team: Stay Resilient, Thrive and Return with Honor!







WRT Medic Practicing
REBT with WRT
NCO Peer Coach, 2005
Camp Liberty, Iraq

Please go to AKO Group Warrior Resilience & Thriving (WRT) and complete and return electronically our Course Feedback Form. You may also download Warrior Family Resilience & Thriving (WFRT) Contact the author, Major Thomas A. Jarrett, LCSW/DCSW at: thomas.a.jarrett@amedd.army.mil 580-917-4325

Resilient Role Model 1SG Creed McCaslin



Creed with son Julian

"Anyone can be a Soldier, not anyone can be a Warrior! A true Warrior strives for peace, not war, however will sacrifice all to protect those that cannot protect themselves. With that said, a true Warrior is not just a fellow comrade in arms, but a good family man, a good friend, and a good member to society"

1SG Creed McCaslin survived a SVBIED where his back was broken and the Mosul Dining facility suicide bombing. As the 1SG of the Warrior Transition BN, Ft. Lewis, WA. 1SG McCaslin inspires other Warriors with PTSD and other physical injuries to apply their Warrior Ethos <u>daily</u> in overcoming their injuries to "return with honor." Creed is a personal role model, WRT Instructor Trainer and mentor to the WRT Program. He lives the S.F. Motto: "De Oppresso Liber" (Free the Oppressed!)